752 278 are rubbed into them. In this case it is clear that the view the natives have of powers of healing is not free of contradiction and confusion. The excrescence on the tree is /184/ natural, that on the person unnatural. By incorporating the tree's natural excrescence in the form of ashes, they hope to induce the human growth to return to its natural shape, that is, to become smooth, while in actual fact one would expect the person to get a swelling from this.

752 For bandages the Pangwe usually use strips of dried banana leaf sheaths. In the case of finger and toe injuries, a small halved calabash, fastened with a string around the joint, is slipped on as a cover (Plate 25).

000 Medicines for impotence, sexual stimulants, devices to influence the woman's sexual life (menstruation, pregnancy, birth) will be treated later (Section 18).

5. Food Prohibitions

262 784 Pangwe life is dominated by a number of rules which they call bekĭ (from ekĭ). These, in the main, prescribe that certain actions shall not be performed at certain times and that certain foodstuffs are to be avoided either at all times or only at certain times. The most important rules are the latter, the food prohibitions. The following are distinguished: 1) ekĭ bebin = taboo for those not initiated into cults, or ekĭ bonenga = taboo for women, who are uninitiated as regards the men's cults; 2) ekĭ bongus = taboo for the initiated of the cults, in practice usually of the women's cults; 3) ekĭ-bondŭ'măn = taboo for young, vigorous persons, and the forbidden animals are called dūm; 4) ekĭ abŭm = 262 784 843 taboo for the belly, that is, the prohibition of certain animals at the time of pregnancy, or ekĭ mŏn = taboo because of the child, that is, food taboos for the duration of the pregnancy and nursing the child, a period during which the taboo applies both to the mother and the father, a consequence of the opinion held by the Pangwe that the woman -- as it is always put -- has the lover or husband "in her belly," that is, that the developping fruit is actually

[Text continues on page 60]

262 784 [843] nothing else but the man who with the help of the female body is newly formed, nourished, and born; 5) ekī, bongō'n = taboo for young girls.

The following list will show which animals are never eaten, which are subject to an ekī, and which are not forbidden.

A. Mammals

1. Never eaten.

262 [784] Crocidura species (mbǎ́šū,m I); Mus rattus L. (tǒ́lō III); Sciurus pumilio Leconte (mvūk esǒn); and the inside of the elephant's tusks (ngǒ e zǒk I), which it is likewise forbidden to step over, "because flaccid and bitter." /185/

2. ekī, bebin or ekī, bonenga.

Sheep and goats (kə̌bə̌d IV) among the Fang; Simia satyrus L. (wǫ̌ə̌ III) among the Fang; Gorilla gorilla L. (ngi IV); Potamochoerus albifrons Du Chaillu (ngūī, Fang) among the Fang; Cephalophus dorsalis Gray (sǒ' IV); Neotragus batesi Winton (odžū,ə̌') among the Fang; the last two are also taboo for the uninitiated of the Sso cult.

3. ekī, bandúman.

Bats (otə̌,n), which also may not be touched by adults (ekī, a bi,); fruit bats (ində̌'m) and Scotonycterus zenkeri Matschie (ngōm I); Dendrohyerax tessmannii A. Br. (nī,ǔ'k IV); Perodicticus batesi Winton (awū'n); Arctocebus aureus Winton (məsə̌tsīdi I and III); Sciurucheirus gabonensis Gray (emə̌m IV) which also may not be touched; Anomalurus species (ngui IV); Mus species (edǔ,); Viverra civetta poortmannii Pucher. (zöə' IV); Bdeogale and Herpestes species (mvə̌̄k); elephant's trunk "because the limb becomes weak"; elephant's limb; Phatages giganteus Illiger (pfī'ma IV) and Manis species (kə̌' IV); Sciurus wilsoni (kūə̌' III).

4. eki-abum or eki-mɔ̀n.

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Sheep and goats (kǎbǎd IV), the large male animals because of their heavy breathing, and the child would have the same heavy breathing; Cercopithecus brazziformis Pocock (fū̀n IV) and Miopithecus talapoin Erxl. (ozɔ̋m), usually not eaten at all by women capable of bearing children; Cercopithecus buccalis Leconte (ɔ̌sɔ̄k); C. laglaizei Pocock (avɔ̌m) and Colebus anthracinus Leconte (mvɔ̂n IV), eaten by some when the child is born and by others during pregnancy, but in that case they prepare a medicine which eliminates the bad effect; Thryonomys swinderenianus Temm. (mvǐb IV) until the birth (if eaten during pregnancy, an antidote is necessary since otherwise the child would get festering skin ulcers, pfɔ́ IV, on the leg; Sciurus rufobrachiatus aubryi A.M.E. (ovɛ̋i) and Sciurus eborivorus Du Chaillu, egg-devouring female (nsɔ̌m I); Sciurus rubripes Du Chaillu (edūn) until the birth; Sciurus eborivorus Du Chaillu (mvok) until the birth if the animal was caught in a tree hollow (tree hollow = female sex organ; the child would remain stuck in the same manner in the mother's belly," as the squirrel in the hollow) (1); Cricetomys dissimilis Rochebrune (kūī IV) until the birth if the animal is sighted near its burrow and killed during its flight; Atherura africana Gray (ngǔm IV) if it is killed by means of baskets at its burrow, /186/ only the skin is taboo if the animal was killed in flight; Mus hypoxanthus Pucheran (abɔ̌k), but because of its small size it is eaten only by young and old people; Mus species (ekɔ̌n), eaten only by young and old people because the animal trembles and because of its small size; Mus species (ndū́n I) because of its long feet; Myoxus angolensis Winton (osim Ntum) because it lives in burrows; Elephas africanus Blumenb., the head taboo until the birth because it is feared that the child would have an equally big head, the feet until

1. In what follows I have omitted as obvious the fear of the Pangwe that the child might acquire the same characteristics or properties as those possessed by the animal.

262 843 the birth because it is feared that the child would have club feet; Potamochoerus albifrons Du Chaillu (ngūī, IV Fang), head and belly until the birth, the head because of its ugly appearance, the belly because of its warts; Bubalus (niă't IV), male animals because they make a rattling noise; Hyemoschus aquaticus Gilg (viŏn, plural lŏn) until the birth; Tragelaphus knutsoni Lemberg (nkŏ'k I) and Cephalophus longiceps Gray (mvū IV), male animals; Cephalophus nigrifrons Gray (zŭm IV) until the birth; Cephalophus leucogaster Gray (miē IV Fang), the animal is supposed "to die of its own accord."

5. Taboo for young girls.

262 [825] Mus univittatus Pet. (mvŏ'n IV) because of the shamelessness of the mouse which in the presence of people steals the Kassada /Trans., cassava?/ as it is being washed; the young girls, therefore are afraid, if they eat the mouse, that a man would steal them just as quickly.

6. Not taboo.

Dog (mvū IV); Maimon planirostris Elliot (esŏge); Hemigalago demidoffi Fischer (ozăm), but eaten only by young people because of its small size; Euoticus elegantulus Leconte (nsĕi, I); Sciurus lemniscatus Leconte and sharpei Gray (osŏn) among the Ntum and Sciurus subviridescens Leconte (sĭb IV); Cricetomys dissimilis Rochebrune (kūī IV) if it is caught in a spring trap and is carrying fruit in its cheeks, but in this case the fruit must be kept in the dining area (būū) and burned to cinders after the birth of the baby; Cricetomys dissimilis and Atherura africana Gray if caught under circumstances other than those so far described; Mus longipes A.M.E. (kŏm IV); Mus pusillulus Peters (okīb), Mus pulchellus Gray (zŏfŏ III), Mus sebastianus Winton (ekū,ī'), Mus species (ayūlū ekū,ī'), Mus tullbergii Thomas (ndă,n IV), but not eaten by adults because the animal is too small and because it lives in the vicinity of houses; Felis leopardus Schreb. (zŏ IV), Felis servalina Puch. (ebĭ'ŏ); Genetta aubryana Puch. (nsĭ'ń I); Nandinia binotata

262 Reinw. (mvā i' IV Fang); Poiana poensis Waterh. (ojǎn); Lutra matschieei Cabr. (abǎn) and Herpestes melanurus Gray (nsǒm I); Elephas africanus Bl. (zǒk IV); Potamochoerus albifrons /187/ Du Chaillu (ngui IV); Bubalus (niǎ't IV); Tragelaphus knutsoni Lemberg (nkǔ'k I); Cephalophus longiceps Gray; sheep and goats with exception of the above-mentioned animals; Limnotragus gratus Scl. (žīb IV); Cephalophus callipygus Peters (mvǐn IV) and Cephalophus melanorheus Gray (ogbǔn).

B. Birds

1. Taboo for the initiated of the Mekang cult (women).

[794] Guttera plumifera (Cass.) (nkǎ'n I) among the Fang.

2. ekī-bondǔ'mǎn.

Himantornis haematopus (Tem.) Hartl. (nkū'lūngū' I); Milvus aegypticus (Gm.) (esǐsǎ'); Strigidae, especially Bubo species (ndžūk I) and Syrnium nuchale Sharpe (akūn); Centropus monachus Rüpp. (dūgū' III) and Passer griseus (Vieill.) (myǎekūm IV).

3. ekī-abǔm or ekī-mǒn.

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843 (a) Because the bird lives in caves or hatches its eggs in secluded nests: Vinago calva (Tem.) (obǒn) and Columba unicincta Cass. (apfǒ'b) until the birth if caught in the next; likewise Calopelia puella (Schl.) (edūgebǒ'm); Capitonidae, for example, Gymnobucco (oyǒ Ntum), Buccanodon (eji'le), and Barbatula species (omvǒk); Indicatoridae (mā' III) and Picidae (ngǔ'megǒ IV); Bucerotidae, for example, Ceratogymna (ngǔn I), Bycanistes (miěm IV), Lophocerus fasciatus (Shaw) (okogbwai), and Orthologhus species until the birth in case they are caught walled up in their tree hollow; Nicator species (ekǒ') until the birth if found in the nest; Sturnidae, for example, Lamprocolius species (kbǎ'n IV) and Pocoptera (mesǒǒ'lǒn IV) until the birth.

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(b) Because the bird has ugly or unnatural visible characteristics: Pteronetta cyanoptera (Tem) Hartl. (alɑ̌t Ntum) until the birth because of its ugly feet; Canirallus oculeus (Tem.) Hartl. (mvūlūbengɑ̌́s IV) until the birth because of its long legs and also because of its screeching; Ardeidae (esĭ́sɔ̰́-osṵ̆ɛ̌ Ntum) until the birth because of their long feet and long necks; Lophoaetus occipitalis (Daud) (abɑ̌́jɛ̰́k) because of the long neck feathers; Buccanodon duchaillui Cass. (ejĭ́le) because of its fat belly; Bias musicus (Vieill.) (abɑ̌́jɛ̰́[k] etɔ̰́k) because of its neck feathers; Diaphorophyia castanea (Fras.) (mekɔ̰́boga III) because of the flaps of skin below the eye; Motacilla vidua Sund (mangɔ̰̌ɔ̰̌mentɛ̰́me III) because of the bobbing tail; Camaroptera griseoviridis (v. Müll.) (dĭndĭ́ III) because of the long feet.

(c) Because the bird calls or screeches in a startling and ugly manner: Theristicus hagedash (Lath.) (ngɑ̌mɔ̰́mɔ̰́ I); Turtur semitorquatus /188/ (Rüpp.) (ɛ̌ŭ́m IV) and Chalcopelia afra (L.) (odū́) until the birth; Francolinus lathami Cass. (obɔ̰̌m) until the birth; Psittacus erithacus L. (kŭ́s IV) until the birth; Musophagidae, such as Corythaeola cristata (Vieill) (kŭ́nŭ́k IV) and Turacus species (mbɑ̌́ III) until the birth; Eurystomus species (kɑ̌́mɑ̌́k IV); Smithornis zenkeri Rchw. (nṵ̆mekūpafɑ̌́n); Sigmodus rufiventris Bp. (angbūŭ́ngbūɔ̰̌) until the birth; Laniarius leucorhynchus (Hartl.) (nzūɛ̰̌bekɔ̰̌t IV); Lanius mackinnoni Sharpe (avɛ̰̌ɛ̰̌́abɔ̰̌be III); Dicrurus coracinus Verr. (obɑ̌́mɔ̰̌ke III).

(d) For other reasons: Polyboroides typicus A. Sm. (eŋgbɑ̌n̰) because of the way it squirts out its excrement and because of its screeching; Gypohierax angolensis (Gm.) until the birth if shot in the nest, since the bird badly befouls its nest; Alcedinidae, for example Halcyon species (akū́i); Ispidina species (okŭdebakŭ́i) until the birth because of the peculiar way the birds duck down when they are on the lookout; many Muscicapidae, for example, Alseonax and Pedilorhynchus species (okṵ̆dūgu) because the bird always settles down on the same spot; Ploceus species (ngā́ɑ̌ III) because of the way they vibrate their wings; Spermestes and Estrilda species (edžɔ̰́le) because of the way they keep seeds in their crops, "cheek pouches."

262 (Laur.) (nkŭ̱m I); the majority of snakes, with the exception of those species mentioned below.

3. ekī-abŭ̱m or ekī-mŏ̱n.

[843] Phython sebae Gmel. (mvŭ̱'m IV), until the birth (1); Grayia

[754] [184] 1. Among the Jaunde taboo for all those not initiated into the Sso cult.

smythii Leach (nsŏ̱k I), likewise.

4. No taboo.

Tree snakes (ajă'n).

D. Amphibia

1. Never eaten.

Bufo superciliaris Blgr. (mvŭ̱n IV); Bufo latifrons Blgr. (dzŭ̱n VII); Rana mascareniensis D. and B. (nkŏ̱n I).

2. ekī bonduman.

Rana zenkeri Ndn. (edzŭ̱); Hylambates species (akăbĕ III Ntum).

3. Not taboo, but eaten only by women.

Rappia species (obă't); Xenopus calcaratus Bchh. and Ptrs. (mĕ'nezŏ̱k IV).

E. Fish

1. ekī bonenga.

Large specimens of Clarias walkeri Gthr., since the women

262 would otherwise become Ngi sick.

2. ekī, abǔm until the birth.

262
843 Eutropius banguelensis Blgr. (ekī da Fang) because of its tendency to spoil rapidly; Eutropius banguelensis? (nkǎ́de-ošōb III) because of its large belly; Distichodus hypostomatus Pellegr. (mbǔ́ń I) because the fish "is supposed to die of its own accord"; Distichodus notospilus Gthr. (akɔ̌́lo III) because of its large gills; Auchenoglanis balayi (Sauv.), var. gravoti Pellegr. (nsǐn I; small specimens, ndǎngɔ̌́na III), because of the large head (see Volume I, Plate 11, Drawing a); Clarias walkeri Gthr. (ngǧ́ IV), smaller specimens because of their large head; Parauchenoglanis guttatus (Lönnbg.) (ebū́) because of the fat belly; Alestes kingsleyae Gthr. (mbǎ́k I) because of "the snout."

The other fish are not taboo. /190/

F. Lower Animals

1. ekī, bonduman.

262 Larvae of the beetle Angosoma centaurus F. Pl. (akū m); the snail Pseudachatina downesii (Gray) (nlɔ̌́aboń I Ntum); Pseudoglessula retifera v. Mart. (tǎ́ń IV) and another snail (ebǔ́).

2. ekī, bonenga, for men ekī, abǔm.

Achatina species, especially marginata Sw. (kɔ̄ī′ IV) (1).

1. In case of transgression, the offenders become Ngi sick.

262

3. ekĭ, abŭm, until the birth.

[843] Edible caterpillars (nkŭn I) and larvae of the Rhynchophorus phoenicis Fabr. (fŏs IV) if found in the cocoon; edible termites (sŭĕme IV Ntum) because of the large belly.

4. Not taboo.

Edible caterpillars and larvae of Rhynchophorus when they are found in the open; dragonfly larvae (esĕ', -bāk), although then the child will urinate a lot, like the dragonfly larvae; common crabs and shrimp; the mussel Lanistes libycus var. bernhardianus (morelet) (alŭń).

All other lower animals are inedible.

[794] Of plant foods only the following are taboo (with the exception of those sacred to the cults, such as the Negro banana used at the Sso and Mawungu): the fruit of the atŭlŭm plant, which tastes horrible, and young mushrooms. These are ekĭ mon since it is feared that children might develop spots on their skin like those on young mushrooms.

825 794 If we examine the deeper reasons why certain animals are never eaten or are "taboo," we find that there is a religious element involved, as well as a fear of the animals' way of life and their appearance, perhaps combined with dietary experiences.

799 825 794 Animals that are taboo for religious reasons may not as a rule be eaten by women and persons who have not been initiated into the particular cult, but where the cult is absent, there is no taboo. Thus, horned animals, which play a role in the cults of the Evil One with their conceptual connection between moon and horns, are taboo; among the Fang this applies to sheep and goats, and throughout the entire region to Cephalophus dorsalis (sŏ'). In the domain of the Ngi cult the gorilla (ngī) is taboo; the same applies, among the Fang, to the chimpanzee (worshipped in the cult of the Evil Ones, Bokung), the pig (an important animal in the Sso cult), and Neotragus batesi (odzŭzĕ') which is worshipped in a manner

825 which one is not even allowed to step over since one's penis would
784 become as flaccid as the elephant's gums. The latter do indeed
[831] look rather uninviting with their bluish-red coloration and flabby consistency. It goes without saying that a woman likewise is prohibited from eating the meat since she could transmit a debilitating influence to the man during intercourse.

943 In the case of temporary food taboos that are enforced for the
825 duration of pregnancy and nursing, the decisive element -- as I have
784 said -- is the fear that the animals' characteristics might be trans-
262 mitted to the child. For example, there is a taboo against the hawk-eagle, Lophoaetus occipitalis (abǎ'jɛ'k), an animal which the Pangwe themselves greatly admire for its beauty, and whose crown the boys try to imitate by sticking long feathers in their hair or behind their ears. In the case of pregnant women, however, the situation is different. They reason as follows: if the child, by acquiring the bird's characteristics with its food, were also to develop an excrescence, how unnatural and ugly that would be! For the rest, the natives fear above all large heads and fat bellies -- two characteristics which frequently strike us unpleasantly in Negro boys -- as well as long legs. In this connection, one readily perceives the accuracy of the Negroes' powers of observation and the precision with which they recognize the slightest differences among various species of a genus. Birds with an ugly screech are completely taboo, since the child might screech in just the same way, something which would be extremely disagreeable, as any father of a family would understand. Of further significance is the exclusion of trembling or wobbling animals, through which the child might even become epileptic. /193/

The most terrible danger threatening pregnant women, however, is from animals which live in any kind of hollow (holes in the ground, in trees) or are caught there. One can speak of a downright horror vacui. If such an animal were to be eaten, the child might also wish to stay in its hollow, "in the belly," and a difficult birth could be expected. Similarly, during this time the parents may not remove any bird nests built in holes in trees, and one of my employees who had made a woman pregnant resolutely refused to make a model of a cassava loaf for me, because it was supposed to be hollow inside.

843 262 184 [845] supposed to be hollow inside. I knew a Jaunde man who refused to eat anything when two pots were set next to each other on his hearth fire. He was afraid this would cause his wife to have twins (mvé, "pot," and myŏ, "vagina").

262 In view of the many hairsplitting distinctions among the food taboos, it is hardly surprising that they are frequently violated by accident. They are also transgressed knowingly, however, if the desire for meat is greater than the fear of the evil consequences of its enjoyment. In these cases, it is again medicines (biăn ekĭ) which help and which are often even taken beforehand or simultaneously by way of prophylaxis. It is probably scarcely necessary [177] for me to mention that food taboos are the first to be relinquished under the influence of a foreign civilization, not all at once, but nonetheless gradually and totally. The religious taboos are clung to most tenaciously of all. Nor need I emphasize that the Pangwe, even at the age of 20, still like to count themselves among the boys if there is a delectable piece of meat to be had. Accordingly, I saw my "boys," who were from ten to 20 years old, consuming without pangs of conscience the parasite kites I had shot. /194/

Section 14

Soothsaying and Science

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1. Soothsaying. Extent and area of practice. -- The soothsayer's tool. -- Master and pupil. -- Fee. -- Distrust of soothsayers. -- Soothsaying in times of war.
2. Meteorology. Rain, lightning, and thunder. -- Appearance and effect of lightning. -- Rain medicines at the time of drying ngon, at cult festivals, at the time of harvest, and on journeys; their evaluation. -- Rainbows: their origin, tale concerning their origin. -- Storms: their origin, counter-medicines.
3. Astronomy. General observations. -- View of the earth as a heavenly body. -- The vault of heaven:

838 Concerning homosexual intercourse among women, I was unable to discover any facts.

839 So far as I know, bestiality does not occur.

6. Pregnancy, Birth

843 The Pangwe recognize the beginning of a pregnancy by the nonappearance of menstruation; they are also familiar with the fact that a slight indisposition and headaches about a month after cohabitation may cause one to suspect pregnancy. Once pregnancy [833] is established, the man continues to have intercourse with a woman for about two more months, but then relations with her must be broken off, since it is feared that the fetus would be destroyed or at least harmed by the seed that it must "drink," It must also be emphasized that this prohibition is not always observed; indeed, [755] there is a medicine, sand in water, which a woman is supposed to drink if the man has intercourse with her shortly before the confinement. The sand is supposed to scour the seed from the body of the fetus.

[843] Usually the beginning of a pregnancy is greeted by the woman as a joyous event. There are also cases, however, when it is not 847 welcomed, for instance, when prohibited intercourse with men of 278 related kin groups has consequences, when a woman is pregnant by an "unloved man," or generally if she does not want to assume the burden of rearing the child or wants to evade the command of sexual abstinence. In such cases -- and they are by no means rare -- the fetus is aborted (a gbwē abŭm, a kū'e abŭm, "to drop the belly (fruit)"). The medicines, for the greater part poisonous substances with which we have already become acquainted as fish poisons, are: 1) Piptadenia africana Hook. f., Leguminosa (tŭm IV), bark loosened in pieces, pared and boiled, and the extract, when cooled, used as an enema; 2) Cylicodiscus gabunensis Harms, Leguminosa (edŭm), used in the same way; 3) kernel of the fruit of Mimusops djave (Lan.) Engl. (tree = adzá,b, kernel = ngŏ,n-ebŏn IV), ground in water; 4) Rubiacea

842 meticulously and in due time gives her permission to have relations
833 with her husband. The first relations must take place on the day fol-
841 lowing the end of the menstrual period so that the not yet completely dried blood in the organs of the woman can mix with the sperm of the man and make a kind of paste called nsũe a mon (lizard of a child), which goes back up into the womb of the woman and there develops [78] and becomes the child. If the woman has relations with a man before the prescribed time, she will definitely become sterile.

842 Sterility, for which many causes are recognized, can be treated, except in the case noted above, in case of bad conduct, and in case of voluntary abortion in the course of a first pregnancy. In order to
847 abort, the woman finds a midwife (ngañ minanga) who sends her out
824 to look for the bark of the afamega vine and the tum tree, which she crushes and with which she makes an infusion. The woman goes to the brush and takes four irrigations of this infusion, and that is enough to induce abortion.

842 On the other hand, the woman who wishes to have children may be barren for several reasons:

843 (1) She may have aborted naturally and without desiring it. An
842 abortion is recognized as having a natural cause, that is, without malignant external intervention, in that the patient recovers three or four days after the accident and without having suffered too much. In this case the midwife gives the invalid a prohibition called awos which restrains her from going near any man other than her husband. She may not say a word to a man except through the mediation of another woman who acts as interpreter; she may not give anything to a man without this intermediary, and may not sit where a man has sat; and for this last reason she always carries a little seat with her. This prohibition must be observed for two or three months, after which the woman is again allowed to have relations with her husband. If at the end of three more months she is still not pregnant, the midwife then gives her a treatment which consists in having the patient take some soup (abura) made of pumpkin (ngon) ground on a stone and mixed with herbs (mia mi nyo, oyah) gathered and chopped by the midwife. These she cooks with salt and pimento in a pot at the bottom of which has been placed a copper ring (kon ango), covered by a large leaf during the cooking.

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842 If three months after the treatment the woman is still not pregnant, there is nothing to be done and she has to give up having children.

(2) A woman may be barren after abortion because of her evur. This
842 is recognized in that she aborts with much suffering and then stays
789 ill afterwards for more than eight days. An appeal is made to the
824 practitioner, who renders the evur harmless by making it crazy. After having made the woman take a medicine made of white honey (abe), bark of a cola tree (abel), and bark of abal and atega trees, all mixed with chicken blood, the practitioner goes with her to the ovah where where he customarily conducts his ceremonies, and performs a kind of exorcism which was not revealed to us. Once back in the village, the woman follows the same [79] treatment as in the case of natural abortion. The secret ceremony performed by the practitioner is called avi evur akur (making the evur crazy).

843 (3) Finally, the abortion may have been caused by a male member
842 of the husband's family, the possessor of an evur, who is revealed by
789 the practitioner. If the woman wants to have children, the guilty one must die. He is discovered in the course of a ceremony, part of which is carried out at night and at which the presence of women is forbidden; this is the dance of the bisir. An akuma singer is brought, who recites stories of the tribes of both husband and wife. Before him, covered by a large cloth, lie three or four men who are the bisir. These men have in their hands pointed pieces of bamboo. A young boy of the husband's family is brought there. He passes several times between the singer and the bisir, who prick the boy's legs with the bamboo sticks. The child then goes back into his hut while the songs continue until dawn, the men of the village dancing and clapping their hands in accompaniment to the singer.

In the morning the husband of the aborted woman goes into the forest to find two wooden forks, a limb, and some branches. He plants the two forks in the village square, places the limb on them horizontally, and conceals the forks under the branches; this structure is called nzum. The child who passed before the bisir the previous night is seated on the rail. Before all the assembled men and women of the village, the aborted woman approaches the child and says madzuna, nzum me tela esi üi, e mur awu makula mebum abure (I say, I stay under the nzum so that the man may die who caused me to abort).

842 After this second part of the ceremony, called elum nzum, the
843 child is hidden for eight days in a hut, and women are forbidden to
789 see him during this time; he is now called mvun. On the morning of the eighth day, the men lay him on a mat in the village square and cover him with mats and cloths so that the women do not see him; the inhabitants of the village are again assembled, and the men of the husband's family step over the mvun one after the other, saying: madzune, e mvun ebue ni ngi me ki me nga kule abum, me bure (I say, the mvun is lying there; if it is I who caused the abortion, may I die). When all the men have passed, the child is taken away. Some time later the guilty one becomes sick, has a swollen abdomen, and dies, there being no possibility of caring for him. After his death, the woman is treated as in the case of natural abortion.

843 Pregnancy (ndzua abum). When a woman is pregnant, she is bound by numerous obligations and prohibitions which aim to care for the child which she carries so that she can bring it into the world in good health. [80]

843 The obligations consist of taking medicines; to prevent the child
757 from having sores in the womb of its mother, she takes an infusion of the roots of various trees. This medicine is called ese bibolo (to treat infections); if it is neglected, the child is born with infected sores which never heal.

The future mother must also go every three days into the brush and give herself a washing with a preparation of bark of ebom which has fermented in water. After each enema, water is added to the vessel containing the pieces of bark, which are kept until the delivery.

That the child may be strong, the pregnant woman anoints her abdomen with an ointment prepared by the midwife with padouk powder mixed with raphia oil and bark.

843 Finally, to prevent abortion, the woman wears on her skin, like a
757 belt, a piece of okum vine, which is not removed until after the birth of the child.

843 All this does not prevent the woman from continuing her work; when she feels tired, it is because the child is sick, and the midwife treats her with one of the medicines mentioned above. If the woman's husband has not had children for a long time, the future mother then enjoys much esteem; she receives gifts, and her husband pays a great deal of attention to her.

843 Throughout her pregnancy the woman continues to live with her husband's other wives.

There are many prohibitions:

First of all, there is the prohibition on sexual intercourse after the pregnancy is certain so that the child will not be born covered with sperms and have a cold all his life.

The future mother may not eat decayed things for fear that the child will be born covered with black spots or with sores.

If the pregnant woman looks into the hollow of a tree, the child will be born with crossed eyes; she must not strike the death blow to an animal, for the child will have convulsions like those of the animal in agony. She may not step over a grave, or the child will have gaps in its skull, its bones will not knit, and it will die. She may not eat bananas or the child will have its head covered with scabs, she may not eat land turtle, or the child will always stay thin; it will also be thin if its mother has gone near a chameleon during her pregnancy. Neither may she step over the mvun or her child will be born with a swollen abdomen and die, just as it will die with a swollen abdomen after birth if its mother has eaten an animal, killed the previous day, which has a swollen belly. [81]

The pregnant woman who goes up to a door may not speak from the threshhold but must open the door and speak from inside; if she does not do so, at the time of delivery the child will come out and then go back into the womb of the mother, causing her unbearable pain.

A woman knows whether she will bring a boy or a girl into the world, if she has noticed whether the nsĩe a mon has gone right or left in her womb: it will be a boy if it goes to the right, or a girl if it goes to the left.

844 Confinement (ekurele mir, literally "wrinkling the eyes"). The confinement takes place in the hut where the woman lives; it takes place nowhere else except by accident, for example, if the child comes into the world sooner than expected, during work in the fields or in the forest.

A circle of dry banana leaves is arranged on the ground in the hut. The woman giving birth is seated on it, legs spread, and held from behind by an especially strong woman. In front of her stands another woman to whom is given the name of mbyale, who waits for the child

made, but this practice is only very rarely followed in cases of free union, ébon, even when that is followed by a regular marriage of the natural parents. Illegitimate children, fruits of an ébon, bobengon, are kept in their mother's clan, where, moreover, they rank socially only after legitimate children.

There used to exist a kind of adoption, rare today, of a political rather than family nature, which could almost be defined as naturalization. It could only be carried out by the head of an extended family on behalf of an orphan, mone nyui, of another clan (orphans within /56/ the clan being, of course, already considered children of the head of the family). The adopted child, abiaé môsô (i.e., "conceived in the daytime," sexual relations being lawful only between sundown and sunrise), came into the clan with a status analogous to that of the monengon. He remained subject to the marriage prohibitions of his clan of origin.

A non-Pahouin outsider permanently residing in a village, a mabe, may benefit through marriage by alliance, élat, which does not thereby make him a member of the clan. He becomes a monekal (sister's son, uterine relative) and his children, though legitimate, belong to their mother's clan.

The descent relationship may be broken by paternal or maternal curse, meyo'é: the parent uttering the curse shows the child his sexual organs, "the place whence he came," while pronouncing a formula oath. The curse is supposed to bring misfortune and death to the offspring accursed, whom everyone avoids. It can only be lifted by a collective purificatory rite (étye, tyô) in which the whole nda bôt participates.

3. Age Grades

The individual's life cycle is marked by a certain number of transitions, which are accompanied, or were usually accompanied, by rites that will be discussed further on (p. 115). These crises are birth, weaning, puberty, attaining majority, marriage, death. Age grades correspond to the intermediate stages; they are less strictly defined today than formerly.

I do not know the exact word for fetus: people say abum, belly. There must be a more precise term, but I think there is a prohibiton connected with it, certainly as regards men, although it may now be

561 no more than a mere conventional taboo, as with certain words con-
843 sidered crude in French. At birth and until weaning a baby is ntyen (nken) or nkeñelé.

842 After weaning, which usually occurs when the child begins to walk by itself, between eighteen months and two years, the nken becomes a mongô (mone fam = boy; mone minga = girl); an uncircumcised
561 boy is called more specifically nsôsôl.

881 Circumcision takes place between eight and twelve years of age
304 (1), before the first premonitory signs of puberty, especially the

1. In former times it was sometimes put off until the youth had killed his first enemy. See Trilles (no. 166) and Largeau (no. 48).

appearance of the first pubic hair (afañ, related to the verb fañ = to do well, correctly, on purpose, from the masculine root FA?). The circumcised boy, ntyi'an, "cut one," becomes an adolescent, ndôman, a term also meaning "son" (in relation to a man, see above, p. 63). Correspondingly, a pubescent girl becomes ngon (which can mean at the same time young girl, daughter of a man, or moon: ayene ngon, "to see the moon," that is, to be menstruating), or also élenan. /57/

The adolescent boy is still ébis, uninitiated. The missions have now adopted the term mvôn, "initiated," to denote church members. Formerly, one became mvôn after initiation, mostly in the great national so initiation, the members of which were called monewôsô (probably "child of the death /la mort/ of the sô"; compare this with the joking relationship, awusô = the dying /le mourir/ of the sô).

561 After initiation, that is, somewhere between the sixteenth and
882 twentieth year, a young man though of military age was not yet a
884 nya môtô, a true person. This he became only upon marriage, when he attained what might be considered his legal, civil, even economic, majority.

561 A girl, ngon, who became ngal or nya ngal, a true woman, by
885 losing her virginity, after marriage was nya minga, a /married/ lady, and ésila or ékua, a matron, when she had brought up her first children. A man with grandchildren was ntole môt, an elder, usually
888 around forty; this was the highest possible social position. Indeed,

556 relations between the sexes, this emphasis to a great extent explains
156 why no true peasantry has developed, but rather a class of nonpeasant planters, comparable in the last analysis to some of the European settlers. The Pahouin remain very much strangers and travelers on the land, whence the importance of personal property (in the legal sense) in their eyes. Nevertheless, a further development is in the making in this connection—described above (p. 96) which is leading to a strengthening of land ownership, /so that/ certain collective reactions in the way of procedure concerning land and domain suggest that we are witnessing, at least in the Cameroons, a genuine putting down of roots.

619 Tribal pride is still considerable, to the point of hostility between different branches of the group, but ethnic cohesion is found vis-à-vis outsiders and gives real unity to the Pahouin as a solid group.

2. The Individual Life Cycle

a. Conception, Gestation, Birth

843 A woman is considered pregnant, a nyoñeya abum, she has got a belly, when she has passed through four menstrual cycles, a nji yene ngon, without seeing the moon. Conception is supposed to be the [842] result of the mixture of sperm, meyôm (with the same root as nnôm, pl. beyôm = male) and of menstrual blood, metyi me ngon, girl's blood or lunar blood; the length of pregnancy is calculated from the date when the last menstruation should have begun. Nowadays a pregnancy of nine months is considered normal, but some of my informants mentioned normal terms of eight or ten ngon (lit., moon or girl), a word that can as well refer to a calendar month as to a lunar month or a menstrual cycle. It is difficult for a man to obtain more precise information on this point since the subject is restricted to women. Besides, longer pregnancies are considered possible, [154] though sometimes suspect; amenorrhea due to a fibroid growth is a proof of sorcery, the tumor being considered an évu. The fetus (for which the term is secret, forbidden, étyi, in any case for men, and probably for women uninitiated into mevungu) is thought at the beginning of gestation to take the form of a lizard, like the first man at the moment of the creation /of the universe/.

843 As soon as pregnancy is recognized, the parents have to observe all sorts of bityi, prohibitions, the first of these being to stop having sexual intercourse, which would bring on a miscarriage or produce a monster. They must not go near a corpse nor attend funerals. The woman must abstain from certain foods /91/, the eating of which would harm the child: fish, which would cause skin diseases; bat and duck, which would mean webbed fingers and toes; snake, which would mean a child born without limbs or with atrophied limbs, etc. The woman must avoid taking long strides and stepping over holes or ditches and must stop wearing drawers if she has done so before. The husband must not nail or tie anything, which would make for a difficult delivery; he must also abstain from certain foods. During pregnancy the woman anoints the belly and breasts with palm oil mixed with baa, wears a special belt of ôkumu liana (a kind of solanaceous plant), and avoids leaving the house barefooted.

"Accidental" miscarriages are generally attributed to the breaking of a taboo (nsem) and entail ritual purification; so long as these have not been carried out, the woman is not allowed to speak to any man except her husband, at least directly, nor to look a man in the face.

783 "Criminal" miscarriages are attributed to sorcery or, more precisely, to an évu, which may belong to the woman herself; they entail more rigorous purification; the lochia are submitted to a kind of magical "disinfecting" before being buried secretly beneath a road so that

847 passers-by will walk over them without knowing. Voluntary abortion, very rare in former times, is becoming fairly common, particularly among unmarried mothers in Christian families; it is brought about by vegetable emmenagogues (one is extracted from papaya root) or by introducing into the neck /of the womb/ a roll of twisted bark (I could not find out from what tree). Sometimes women induce abortion in one of their co-wives out of jealousy.

844 The first delivery and often succeeding ones usually take place in the woman's native village (jañ). A husband is not allowed to take wife and child back home until after payment of what is really the final installment of the bride price, particularly a substantial present for the mother-in-law, which is repeated at each birth, whence the proverb, "A mother-in-law's basket is never full." The parturient is delivered in a sitting position, with her mother or ntyi (mother-in-law or co-wife of higher rank) holding her from behind, and assisted by a midwife, mbialé binga, formerly an official in